

The General Services Administration (GSA) Multiple Award Schedule Program: Is It Right for You?

Presentation By:

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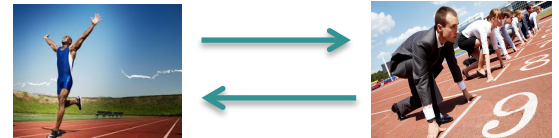


Professional Background

- In federal acquisition roles since 1981; GSA/VA Schedule consultant since 2003
- Negotiation assistance to hundreds of companies of varied sizes-- across many industries-- in obtaining GSA or VA Schedule Contracts
- Ongoing guidance to contractors re: contract compliance, contract management/maintenance, and GSA/VA policy interpretation
- Worked in nearly all Schedule areas – including both products and professional services
- Currently with the Gormley Group (based in D.C.); based in St. Petersburg, FL

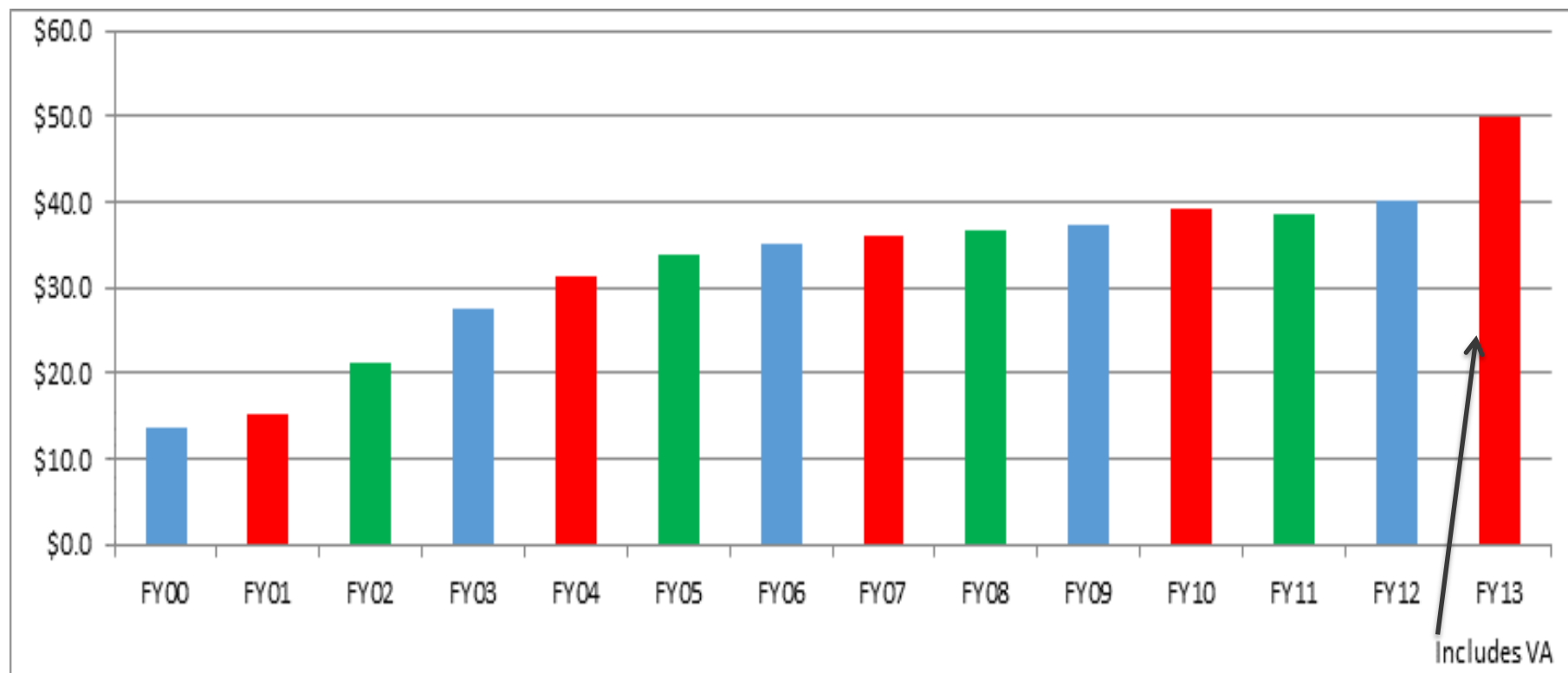
GSA/VA Schedule Benefits

- A GSA / VA Schedule is a 20 year contract to sell to any/every federal agency. “IDIQ”
- It acts as a “seal of approval” for contractors and opens doors into the government market
- Differentiates you from non-Schedule vendors with same services/products
- Simplifies ordering procedures for the Government Customer
- Reduces time from requisition to order; use of GSA Advantage and eBuy Tools
- Limited competitive evaluations; minimal protest exposure
- Direct relationship with contractor
- The government pays its bills.



GSA/VA Schedule Sales Overview

- **GSA Schedules Sales Revenue Growth Since Overhaul of the Program and the Addition of Services.**



Dept. of Energy Customers

- **The Office of Science Laboratories**

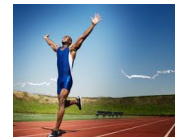
- Ames Laboratory, Ames, Iowa
- Argonne National Laboratory, Argonne, Illinois
- Brookhaven National Laboratory, Upton, New York
- Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory, Batavia, Illinois
- Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Berkeley, California
- Oak Ridge National Laboratory, Oak Ridge, Tennessee
- Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, Richland, Washington
- Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory, Princeton, New Jersey
- SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory, Stanford, California
- Thomas Jefferson National Accelerator Facility, Newport News, Virginia



Department of Energy Buyers

- **PROGRAM OFFICES**

- Advanced Research Projects Agency - Energy
- Loan Programs Office
- Office of Electricity Delivery & Energy Reliability
- Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy
- Office of Environmental Management
- Office of Fossil Energy
- Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs
- Office of Legacy Management
- Office of Nuclear Energy
- Office of Science
- Etc.



Department of Energy Buyers

- **STAFF OFFICES**

- Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Affairs
- Office of Economic Impact and Diversity
- Office of Energy Policy and Systems Analysis
- Office of Environment, Health, Safety & Security
- Office of Hearings and Appeals
- Office of Independent Enterprise Assessments
- Office of Inspector General
- Office of Intelligence and Counterintelligence
- Office of International Affairs
- Office of Management
- Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance
- Office of Public Affairs
- Etc.

Federal Executive

- **Advisory Council on Historic Preservation**
- **Agency for International Development**
- **Agriculture, Department of**
- **Air Force, Department of**
- **American Battle Monuments Commission**
- **Armed Forces Retirement Home**
- **Army Corp of Engineers**
- **Army, Department of**
- **Bonneville Power Administration**
- **Bureau of Land Management**
- **Central Intelligence Agency**
- **Commodity Credit Corporation**
- **Commodity Futures Trading Commission**
- **Consumer Products Safety Commission**
- **Corporation for National and Community Service**
- **Defense, Department of**
- **Defense agencies and Joint Service Schools**
- **Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board**
- **Education, Department of**
- **Energy, Department of**
- **Environmental Protection Agency**
- **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**
- **Executive Office of the President**

...and dozens more

Other Federal & International

- Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts
- American Printing House for the Blind
- American National Red Cross
- American Samoa, Government of
- Architect of the Capitol
- Army/Air Force Exchange Service
- Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board
- Civil Air Patrol
- Coast Guard Auxiliary (through the U.S. Coast Guard)
- CoBank, ACB
- Committee for Purchase from People Who are Blind or Severely Disabled
- Contractors and subcontractors- cost reimbursement (as authorized by the applicable agency's contracting official)
- Contractors and subcontractors- fixed price (security equipment only when so authorized by the applicable agency's)
- INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
- African Development Fund
- American Red Cross
- Asian Development Bank
- Counterpart Foundation, Inc.
- Customs Cooperation Council
- European Space Research Organization
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- Great lakes Fishery Commission
- Inter-American Defense Board
- Inter-American Development Bank
- Inter-American Institute of Agriculture Sciences
- Inter-American Investment Corporation
- Inter-American Statistical Institute
- Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission

...and dozens more

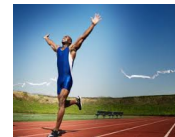
Is a GSA/VA Schedule Right for My Company

- Embarking on obtaining a GSA Schedule is one thing; being a successful contractor is another.
- Making this decision is very much like deciding to run a Marathon – It sounds like a good idea, but completing one is a whole other thing.
- What will it take?
 - Time
 - Resources
 - Patience & Stamina



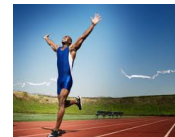
Is a GSA/VA Schedule Right for My Company

- **To qualify for GSA/VA Schedule (Minimum):**
 - For Service Companies – 2 years in business is required
 - For Product companies – Must manufacture the items you wish to offer or have support and documentation from the manufacturer
 - Solid financials. “Evidence of Responsibility”
 - Ability to achieve \$25,000 in annual sales through the program.
 - Ability to comply with all applicable contract terms. For example, you must be able to control the your sales prices, make accurate reports.



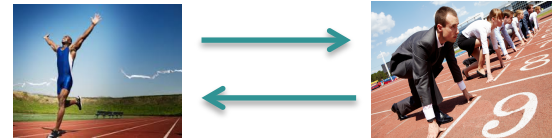
Do I Want a Schedule Contract?

- **A GSA Schedule can run for 20 years, so the maintenance and care must be ongoing.**
- **Ask the following questions:**
 - Is there a market for my product/service in the Government?
Can I distinguish myself from my competitors?
 - Do I have the time and patience to submit and negotiate an acceptable contract?
 - Do I have time to focus on marketing and selling to the Government? Do I have the patience needed to be successful using the contract? The government sales cycle is typically twice as long as the commercial sales cycle.



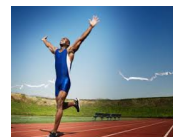
Step One – Starting the Race

- Putting together a quality offer that will result in the highest possible profit with the least amount of administrative costs.
- The beginning of the process can be taxing and seem to take forever. Taking time and care can pay off later.
- Identify all the requirements and ensure all are accurate and complete before submitting. If not, your race to a contract will end swiftly with a rejection by GSA.



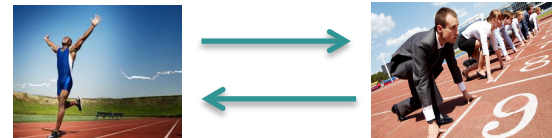
Step One – Starting the Race, cont.

- The GSA solicitation documents are complex and contain much “governmentese.” If you don’t have government acquisition experience, consider getting help.
- Free resources include GSA itself (webinars), your local PTAC organization, or SCORE.
- Paid resources include lawyers and consultants that will work with you hand in hand to submit and negotiate the offer.
 - Be wary of anyone guaranteeing government sales or offers to good to be true.
 - To prepare and submit a quality offer can take at least 60 days and may take GSA more than six months or more to review and approve.



Step Two – Setting a Pace for the Long Haul

- The GSA/VA Schedule review and negotiation process is a series of clarifications and a final discussion on pricing and terms.
- Check your disclosures---then check them again. Ensure that clarifying information is current, accurate and complete. If you don't find problems, you're probably doing it wrong. Conduct an "audit."
- It is also a time to understand the contract terms .



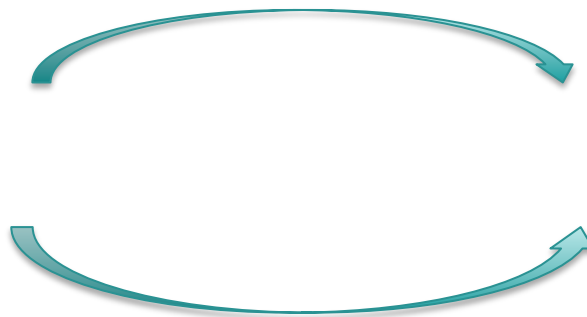
Step Two – Setting A Pace, cont.

- **Aside from negotiating a final price – GSA/VA also negotiates specific contract terms that can be just as important as negotiating a good price:**
 - The Price Reductions Clause – Identifying a Basis of Award/Most Favored Customer
 - Economic Price Adjustment
 - The Trade Agreements Act
- **Negotiation pricing and/or rates – GSA will be extremely aggressive given the current fiscal environment.**
- **GSA will be looking for best possible pricing, but there are negotiation opportunities.**



Step Three – Succeeding as GSA/VA Schedule Holder

- Having an awarded GSA or VA Schedule contract does not mean customers will come running to purchase from you.
- Kick your marketing and sales efforts into high gear.
- Establish compliance processes early and audit them often.



Step Three – Succeeding, cont.

- **Sales & Marketing**

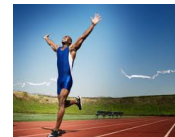
- The federal government is too big to tackle at the start. **FOCUS.**
- Continually monitor for opportunities through GSA eBuy, FBO.gov, and Fedbid Target market.
- Be prepared to educate and inform Government customers about GSA/VA Multiple Award Schedule program. Many are unfamiliar and need guidance.
- Use Teaming. Don't be afraid to start as a subcontractor.
- Develop market intelligence, i.e. attend agency briefings and events; market research organizations; participate in industry groups; review agency websites.
- Join industry organizations dedicated to your market in the government. Become active. Network.

Step Three – Succeeding, cont.

- Be patient, but persistent. Recognize the longer sales cycle.
- Give the sales process time to develop and mature. There may be long lead-times for larger procurements.
- If you lose, use it as a learning/marketing opportunity. Get a debrief.
- Update your GSA/VA contract through modification to keep offering current and pertinent offerings.
- Stay educated to what is happening in the Government market and provide training to all staff focused on selling to the Government.
- Be willing experiment, change, and make improvements.
- Being successful in selling to the Government is difficult, but the rewards can be well worth the effort.

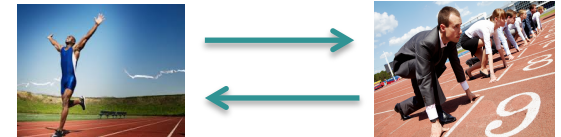
Step Three – Succeeding, cont.

- **Compliance**
 - **Develop a Compliance Strategy/ Process/ Commitment**
 - **Make someone accountable. Give him/her support**
 - **Keep contract fresh with new products.**
 - **Stay educated on changes.**
 - **Keep an expert close by.**



GSA/VA Schedule Trends

- On-going customer budget pressures.
- GSA trying to grow market share
- New GSA Contract Vehicles
 - OASIS
 - Strategic Sourcing
 - Contract consolidations
- GSA/VA Contract Cancellations
 - Both agencies will cancel contracts if \$25,000 a year in sales in not achieved.



Contact Information

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